

Get Involved





Besides writing your city and county councils, the following is a list of groups that are currently meeting on matters involving the Houghton Transfer Station. Please contact me at the 4/29/03 meeting or by phone at (206) 296-1011, if you would like to more about these councils:

- **Attend** the King County District 11 community meeting on **Tuesday, April 29, 2003 at 7:00pm, and sign up to receive updates** on the Houghton Transfer Station.
- **Houghton Community Council.**
- **Kirkland City Council.**
- **King County Council.**

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SEATTLE, WA
PERMIT NO. 1788

HOUGHTON TRANSFER STATION UPDATE



Jane Hague, Councilmember
Metropolitan King County Council, District Eleven
516 Third Avenue, Room 1200
Seattle, WA 98104-3272
(206) 296-1011, jane.hague@metrokc.gov
www.metrokc.gov/hague

Councilmember Jane Hague

April, 2003

Houghton Transfer Station Update

Dear Neighbor:

New policies are being debated within King County's Solid Waste Division which may affect the current status and future of the **Houghton Transfer Station**. Your input will be important as both King County and the City of Kirkland debate policies regarding Solid Waste issues. I invite you to review the information in this newsletter and [please join Kirkland City Mayor, Larry Springer, and me at a community meeting on:](#)



Tuesday, April 29, 2003 at 7:00pm
Celebration Space / Fellowship Hall
Lake Washington United
Methodist Church
7525 132nd Avenue NE
Kirkland, WA 98033

I look forward to discussing the current Houghton Transfer Station policies which affect its status now, and the new policies being developed which may affect its future. Please feel free to contact me at (206) 296-1011 or jane.hague@metrokc.gov.

With warm regards,



METROPOLITAN
KING COUNTY
COUNCIL
DISTRICT 11

Policy issues facing King County's Solid Waste Division

The most **important** questions for the **South Rose Hill and Bridle Trails residents** to answer at the **April 29th meeting** are:

- 1. Do you want the Houghton Transfer Station to close completely? Or, would you just like to change the nature of its services?**
- 2. Would you be willing to pay higher fees and garbage rates if the Houghton Transfer Station was no longer available?**
- 3. Are the services offered at the Houghton Transfer Station valuable to you? Would the alternative of using other transfer stations be a viable option for you?**
- 4. Are there any other remaining issues with the Houghton Landfill?**

The King County Executive and the Solid Waste Division are currently formulating a business plan that could allow business competition, prepare the County for waste export, and offset costs for rental fees now required for the Cedar Hill Landfill. This plan will also design the County's Solid Waste/Utilities business after the Cedar Hills Landfill closes. The following are broad yet complex policy questions facing the City of Kirkland and King County.

- 1. Should rent be charged for the Cedar Hills Landfill?**
- 2. Should the County be competing with the private sector by operating an intermodal facility to remove solid waste?**
- 3. When Cedar Hills Landfill closes, where and how should solid waste be exported?**
- 4. What will the County do to equalize the solid waste tonnage from at or over-capacity transfer stations to those which are under-utilized?**
- 5. How can rates be stabilized with private haulers and with fees?**
- 6. Will King County continue to commit to waste reduction and recycling?**

Please come to the April 29th meeting to acquire background information on the Councils' policy questions listed above.

Houghton Transfer Station history and current status

The **1992** Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (CSWMP) included a recommendation to close the Houghton Transfer Station and build a new facility in northeast King County.

This closure recommendation was postponed due to the Council's concerns about raising

solid waste rates for residents, resulting in postponement of the closure and the approval of the CSWMP. Therefore, the Council decided - via Motion #9426 - that no new transfer station should be built until the efficiency of current stations had been fully maximized.

The following policy recommendations resulted from these deliberations:

- ◆ "Seek to permit the Waste Management, Northwest Woodinville Recycling Transfer Station. Add a new facility in the Woodinville area when necessary.
- ◆ Close the Houghton Transfer Station after addition of the Woodinville Area Transfer Station and expansion of the First Avenue Northeast Transfer Station.
- ◆ Expand the First Northeast Transfer Station on site, as space permits."
(Note: currently, legislative documents are being reviewed by the Executive, soon to be transmitted to the Council, to approve a completed Facilities Master Plan for the First Northeast facility.)



In **1995**, the Council formally rejected a rate increase proposal (Ordinance #11949) designed, in part, to implement transfer station improvements set forth in the 1992 solid waste management plan. These improvements were to include closure of the Algona and Houghton transfer stations and the relocation of these facilities to new sites.

Based on council action in denying the rate increase, the executive pursued a policy direction to minimize required capital investments in transfer stations by focusing on service and facility improvements of current stations, and to reduce or eliminate the need for new transfer stations.

The applicable King County Regional Transfer Station (RTS) policies and laws are:

RTS-2. In maintaining the solid waste transfer system, the county should maximize the use of existing transfer stations and evaluate the need for new stations.

RTS-3. The county should focus capital investment in part to expand, relocate or replace, or any combination thereof, transfer stations when safety, efficiency, capacity or customer services needs cannot be met by existing transfer facilities.



RTS-6. The county shall evaluate the feasibility of siting an additional transfer facility to serve residents of northeast King County.

Motion #11601 passed on October 21, 2002 in which the county officially determined that the Houghton Transfer Station cannot meet "safety, efficiency, capacity or customer services needs".

I ensured that the following provisos were listed within the 2003 Adopted Budget that "froze" certain funds and plans for Houghton to force a lowering of its capacity or a closure of the facility.

- "\$200,000 from this appropriation (funds for Solid Waste) shall not be expended or encumbered until the King County Council approves by legislative instrument a plan from the Solid Waste Division to divert solid waste transfer station usage from over-capacity transfer stations to underutilized transfer stations in the county..."
- "Since... Ordinance No. 11601 has already determined that the Houghton Transfer Station has exceeded its capacity to efficiently serve the needs of its customers, no funds shall be expended or encumbered for project No. 013086, Houghton Transfer Station Facility Master Plan, until the King County Council approves by legislative instrument a plan for siting a northeast King County transfer station to replace or relocate the Houghton Transfer Station ... "
- "... no funds from the appropriation for project No. 003093, Transfer Station Seismic Retrofit, shall be expended or encumbered for any improvements to the Houghton Transfer Station, until the King County Council approves by legislative instrument a plan for siting a northeast King County transfer station to replace or relocate the Houghton Transfer Station ... "



Schlien nominated for Solid Waste Advisory Committee

Houghton area neighborhood activist, Raymond Schlien, has been nominated by the King County Executive to serve on the King County Solid Waste Advisory Committee, (SWAC). Schlien, a retired Boeing Aerospace Division executive, has an extensive business planning and engineering background. His 32 years at Boeing included work in Facilities Planning and New Business Proposals. Prior to Boeing, he worked for Western Electric Company, Kollsman Aircraft Instrument Company and Cooper Union School of Engineering.

According to Councilmember Jane Hague, "Ray Schlien is an ideal appointment to this advisory committee. He is exceptionally knowledgeable on solid waste issues and he can be counted on to add a voice for eastside constituencies served by the Houghton and Factoria transfer stations."

Once confirmed Schlien will join other SWAC members in advising the King County Executive on all aspects of Solid Waste management, planning, programs and policies. This is a key role since Houghton and other transfer stations are a dominant element of the Solid Waste Division's current planning process.